

PM Conformity Hot Spot Analysis – Project Summary for Interagency Consultation

RTIP ID# <i>(required)</i> RIV520109				
TCWG Consideration Date 02/23/2010				
Project Description <i>(clearly describe project)</i>				
<p>The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) proposes to extend commuter rail service approximately 24 miles from the existing Riverside Downtown Station to south of the City of Perris. This commuter rail service is identified as the Perris Valley Line (PVL), and it would be an extension of the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA)/Metrolink 91 line from the existing Riverside Downtown Station along about a 3 mile portion of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) main line and would connect to the San Jacinto Branch Line (SJBL) using the proposed Citrus Connection and run about 21 miles southerly. The PVL would include installation and rehabilitation of track; construction of four stations and a Layover Facility; improvements to existing grade crossings and culverts; replacement of two existing bridges along the SJBL; and construction of communication towers, sound walls, and landscape walls. It is anticipated that commuter rail service on the PVL would begin in late 2012. Initially, 12 trains per day would serve the route. It should also be noted that the project is a Transportation Control Measure as identified in the RTIP.</p> <p>See Attachment 1 and Figure 1.</p>				
Type of Project <i>(use Table 1 on instruction sheet)</i>				
Program Code: Rail Extension RAN92. (The PVL is a <u>regional commuter rail project</u> ; however, Table 1 does not include that as a project type.)				
County Riverside	Narrative Location/Route & Postmiles The proposed project would extend about 24 miles from Riverside to Perris along an existing rail corridor. From north to south, the project extends from the northeast part of the City of Riverside west of I-215 (near Citrus Avenue); traverses the Hunter Park industrial area; continues southerly, west of the Box Springs Mountain Reserve and parallel to Watkins Drive in the University of California, Riverside area. The line then veers east for a short stretch before continuing southerly, easterly of I-215 and SR-60, through the Box Springs area. The line passes beneath the I-215/SR-60 Interchange where it runs parallel to the west side of I-215, between the Cities of Riverside and Moreno Valley. Continuing south, the line runs west of March Air Reserve Base, east of the Riverside National Cemetery, into the City of Perris. Continuing through the City, the line turns southeasterly and runs parallel to and northerly of Case Road, ending near Mapes Road, immediately west of I-215. As a rail project highway postmiles are not applicable.			
Caltrans Projects – EA# Not applicable.				
Lead Agency: RCTC				
Contact Person Edda Rosso	Phone# 951-787-7141	Fax#	Email erosso@rctc.org	
Hot Spot Pollutant of Concern <i>(check one or both)</i> PM2.5 X PM10 X				
Federal Action for which Project-Level PM Conformity is Needed <i>(check appropriate box)</i>				
Categorical Exclusion (NEPA)	X EA or Draft EIS	FONSI or Final EIS	PS&E or Construction	Other
Scheduled Date of Federal Action:				
August 2010 (Federal Transit Administration [FTA]) - NEPA Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI)				
NEPA Delegation – Project Type <i>(check appropriate box)</i>				
NA Exempt	NA Section 6004 – Categorical Exemption	NA Section 6005 – Non-Categorical Exemption		

Current Programming Dates <i>(as appropriate)</i>				
	PE/Environmental	ENG	ROW	CON
Start	2008	2010	2010	2011
End	2010	2011	2011	2012

Project Purpose and Need (Summary): *(attach additional sheets as necessary)*

See Attachment 2.

Surrounding Land Use/Traffic Generators *(especially effect on diesel traffic)*

Land use surrounding the proposed project varies from industrial/commercial, residential, and open space. Traffic generators in the project vicinity include the Hunter Park industrial area; the University of California, Riverside; and March Air Reserve Base. Aside from the introduction of diesel locomotives (12 trips per day beginning in late 2012), the proposed project would have no effect on diesel traffic in the area.

As an operating commuter rail line, the PVL would not result in an increase in diesel engines congregating in one location. The project doesn't include any provisions for a train yard or staging area; only very short-term station stops. It is not anticipated that the trains would sit and idle in any one location for more than a minute or two while passengers get on and off the train.

In accordance with SCAQMD guidelines provided in its CEQA Air Quality Handbook, a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) was performed to calculate the risk to human health from emission of diesel particulate matter due to the operation of the proposed project near sensitive receptors. Part of the HRA includes using a dispersion model to estimate the concentration of diesel particulate matter at a specified distance from the source. This model was used to calculate concentrations of diesel emissions at the stations based on diesel fuel consumption for the entire trip from South Perris to Los Angeles. This includes fuel used during engine running and idling at the stations. Based on the proposed train schedule, the trains would not spend extensive time idling at the Layover Facility. The trains would be stopped at the Layover Facility for time periods greater than 60 minutes and would not be idling.

Opening Year: Build and No Build LOS, AADT, % and # trucks, truck AADT of proposed facility

Not applicable. This is not a highway project.

RTP Horizon Year / Design Year: Build and No Build LOS, AADT, % and # trucks, truck AADT of proposed facility

Not applicable. This is not a highway project.

Opening Year: If facility is an interchange(s) or intersection(s), Build and No Build cross-street AADT, % and # trucks, truck AADT

Opening year is 2012. The PVL project area is an existing rail corridor that intersects a number of streets. Though 12 trains would be added to the corridor, wait times for vehicular traffic at the railroad crossings (30 seconds for typical operations) would not be any longer than a single red phase of a typical traffic signal cycle. Additionally, the PVL project would only operate one train within the corridor during peak traffic hours.

RTP Horizon Year / Design Year: If facility is an interchange (s) or intersection(s), Build and No Build cross-street AADT, % and # trucks, truck AADT

Horizon Year/Design Year is 2030. The PVL project area is an existing rail corridor that intersects a number of streets. Though 12 trains would be added to the corridor, wait times for vehicular traffic at the railroad crossings (30 seconds for typical operations) would not be any longer than a single red phase of a typical traffic signal cycle. Additionally, the PVL project would only operate one train within the corridor during peak traffic hours.

Describe potential traffic redistribution effects of congestion relief *(impact on other facilities)*

As a commuter rail project, it is anticipated implementation of the PVL would reduce traffic on I-215 and SR-60, thereby relieving some traffic congestion on the freeways.

Comments/Explanation/Details *(attach additional sheets as necessary)*

The proposed project is intended to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion in the area. The project is not a traffic generator or capacity enhancing project. Based on the project traffic study, the proportion of heavy diesel truck volumes using the freeway segments is estimated to be on the order 7-8% of total AADT and on connector ramps about 2%; and it is presumed that these proportions of the total daily traffic demand would not change during the years after completion of construction through the RTP horizon year of 2035. Furthermore, the project does not include highway facility improvements to connect a highway to a major freight, bus, or intermodal terminal; the project would not affect a congested intersection that has a significant increase in the number of diesel trucks. As shown above, the LOS for intersections affected by the project will improve compared to the No Build scenario; the project would not involve a significant increase in the number of diesel transit buses or diesel trucks.

The air quality study performed as part of the environmental document for the PVL demonstrates that the project would not result in new or worsened PM2.5 & PM10 violations. A PM2.5 & PM10 hot-spot analysis was not conducted as part of the environmental document for the PVL based on the rationale listed below:

In March 2006, USEPA issued a guidance document titled Transportation Conformity Guidance for Qualitative Hot-spot Analyses in PM2.5 and PM10 Nonattainment and Maintenance Areas. This guidance details a qualitative step-by-step screening procedure to determine whether project-related particulate emissions have a potential to generate new air quality violations, worsen existing violations, or delay attainment of NAAQS for PM2.5 or PM10.

The proposed project is in an area designated as nonattainment for PM10 and PM2.5. According to the most recent USEPA Transportation Conformity Guidance, a PM10/PM2.5 hot-spot analysis is required for Projects of Air Quality Concern (POAQC) in non-attainment areas (40 CFR 93.123 (b) (1)). Projects that are exempt under 40 CFR 93.126 or not POAQC do not require hot-spot analysis.

The proposed project does not meet the criteria of an exempt project under 40 CFR 93.126. However, the USEPA specifies in 40 CFR 93.123(b) (1) that only projects considered POAQC are required to undergo a PM10/PM2.5 hot-spot analysis. USEPA defines projects of air quality concern as certain highway and transit projects that involve significant levels of diesel traffic or any other project that is identified by the PM2.5 SIP as a localized air quality concern. A discussion of the proposed PVL compared to POAQC, as defined by 40 CFR 93.123(b) (1), is provided below:

1) New or expanded highway projects with greater than 125,000 annual average daily traffic (AADT) and 8 percent or more of such AADT is diesel truck traffic.

The proposed project is not a new or expanded highway project.

2) New or expanded highway projects affecting intersections that are at Level of Service (LOS) D, E, or F with a significant number of diesel vehicles or those that will change to LOS D, E, or F because of increased traffic volumes from a significant number of diesel vehicles related to the project.

The proposed project is not a new or expanded highway project.

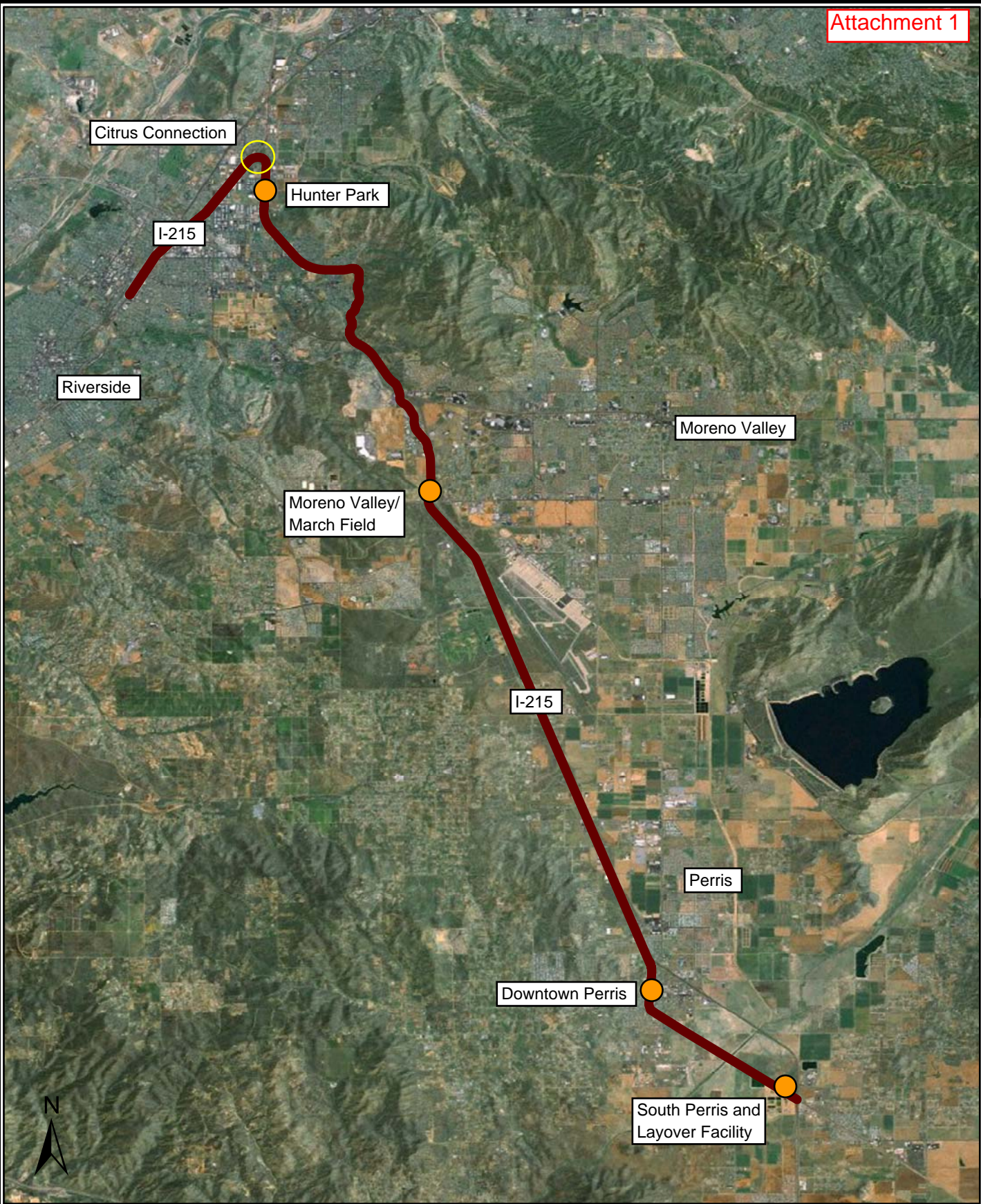
3) New bus and rail terminals and transfer points that have a significant number of diesel vehicles congregating at a single location.

Although the proposed project would expand service to an existing commuter rail terminal (Riverside Downtown Station), it would not increase the number of diesel vehicles congregating at any single location. In addition, the proposed layover facility in South Perris would only accommodate a maximum of four Metrolink trains. These trains would receive overnight light maintenance (cleaning, inspection etc.). Heavy maintenance of these vehicles requiring excessive engine idling would be done at an existing off-site Metrolink facility.

4) Projects in or affecting locations, areas, or categories of sites that are identified in the PM2.5 and PM10 applicable implementation plan or implementation plan submission, as appropriate, as sites of violation or possible violation.

The project site is not in or affecting an area or location identified in any PM2.5 or PM10 implementation plan. The immediate project area is not considered to be a site of violation or possible violation.

Based on the information provided above, the proposed project is not expected to introduce significant amounts of diesel truck traffic, would not generate additional diesel truck traffic above levels anticipated without implementation of the project, and is in compliance with the SIP/RTIP. Therefore, the project qualifies for a finding of "Not POAQC" based on the definition contained in 40 CFR 93.123(b)(1). The proposed project would also not be considered a project of air quality concern with respect to PM10 or PM2.5 emissions as defined by 40 CFR 93.123(b) (1). Therefore, a PM10/PM2.5 hot-spot evaluation is not required.



PROJECT NO.	92666
DRAWN:	1/4/10
DRAWN BY:	JP
CHECKED BY:	RM
FILE NAME:	92666vicEA.MXD

PERRIS VALLEY LINE TRANSPORTATION WORKING GROUP
RIVERSIDE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION PERRIS VALLEY LINE RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

FIGURE
1

PURPOSE AND NEED

The Perris Valley Line (PVL) purpose and need was developed through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Alternatives Analysis (AA) process. The AA process is intended to identify which transit improvements would best meet locally defined Goals and Objectives for a specified study area. The AA purpose and need was developed based upon understanding the transportation conditions, problems, and issues within the specified study area that should be addressed by a major transportation investment.

The AA identified transportation improvements to alleviate traffic congestion within the study area, thereby improving mobility for people and goods. These transportation improvements should also provide and/or improve linkages to the overall transportation system, support achievement of air quality goals, while minimizing environmental and community impacts to the extent possible.

Transportation facilities within the study area include Interstate 215 (I-215) and the San Jacinto Branch Line (SJBL). I-215 is the only continuous north-south highway facility east of I-15 in western Riverside County. I-215 traverses portions of Riverside, Moreno Valley, Perris, Menifee, Murrieta, and Temecula and serves other communities along the corridor including San Jacinto, Hemet, and unincorporated county areas. The SJBL is a rail line that generally runs west of and parallel to I-215 between Riverside and Perris. The SJBL is currently only used by Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) as a very low volume freight route. The AA and other planning studies (see following REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXTS) have considered use of the SJBL right of way and have concluded the under-used rail corridor could be used to relieve existing and forecasted traffic congestion.

In addition, the AA process included a public outreach component (general public, affected communities, and stakeholders, etc.) that identified these needs:

- To provide transit travel options to growing population and employment centers
- To coordinate transportation planning and community development
- To improve use of underutilized transportation resources

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1 – Improve the Transportation System with Alternate Travel Choices

- Reduce highway congestion within the corridor
- Improve the attractiveness of public transit as a commuter alternative to the auto by making it more available, reliable, and convenient
- Establish and expand the regional transit network within and beyond the study corridor
- Promote a “seamless” regional transit system

Goal 2 - Promote Community/Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

- Strengthen the older urban communities as centers of economic opportunity
- Broaden the range and availability of public transportation alternatives between the various urban areas along the corridor for a variety of trip purposes
- Encourage transit-friendly communities, at higher densities
- Foster TOD around transit stations
- Provide improved mobility opportunities to the transit dependent

Goal 3 – Minimize Adverse Environmental Impacts

- Contain residential, commercial, and industrial “sprawl” development
- Conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) as required by the Clean Air Act (CAA) Amendments of 1990
- Minimize impacts to the natural and human-made environment
- Minimize the need for new ROW, thereby reducing land use impacts to the study corridor

Goal 4 – Invest and Deploy Resources Effectively and Efficiently

- Invest resources effectively
- Improve the productivity and cost effectiveness of transit services in the corridor
- Enhance and build upon the existing public transportation system within the corridor
- Select investments that build upon underused and abandoned transportation resource

REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXTS

State and local planning efforts applicable to the project corridor anticipate an increasing need for transportation alternatives and also specify, in some cases, the PVL as a potential solution to projected transportation needs. The transportation needs are associated with the forecasted growth in population and employment, and the accompanying increases in congestion. The studies and reports described below for the I-215/SJBL alignment and the region have underscored the need for diversifying transportation service. These studies and reports support the conclusion that there is not sufficient capacity on the existing transportation network to meet the demands of the corridor, even with planned increases in roadway capacity and bus service. The studies and reports include:

- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

The RTP and RTIP are the responsibility of the SCAG, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for southern California, and are required by statewide and metropolitan planning rules and regulations. The plans examine demographic, economic, and transportation trends and needs within a specified planning area in order to develop an ongoing strategy for implementing transportation investments to meet identified needs. The PVL is included in both the RTP (adopted 2008) and RTIP (adopted 2008). The RTP is an update to the previous Regional Transportation Plan (2004) and presents an assessment of the overall growth and economic trends in the SCAG region through the year 2035. The RTP is necessary to receive state and federal funding, and is consistent with federal and state requirements. The RTP is the culmination of a multi-year effort focusing on maintaining and improving the transportation system through a balanced approach. This balanced approach considered transportation system preservation, operation and management; improved coordination between land use decisions and transportation investments; and strategic expansion of the system to accommodate future growth. The RTIP is a listing of all funded transportation projects proposed over a six-year period (Fiscal Years 2008/09 – 2013/14) for the SCAG region. All projects included in the 2008 RTIP are consistent with the current RTP policies, programs, and projects.

Key projects related to the study corridor include county-wide SCRRA/Metrolink improvements, reconstruction and upgrade of the SJBL for passenger rail service between Riverside and Perris (Perris Valley Line), corridor and capacity improvements

for the I-215, I-15 and SR-91, and the Mid County Parkway which will provide a 16-mile parkway to improve regional east-west mobility between the San Jacinto and Perris areas.

- Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP) – Riverside County Planning Department

Riverside County Planning Department developed the RCIP which includes a comprehensive, three-part, integrated program balancing the housing, transportation, and economic needs of a large population with the existing environment and available natural resources. RCIP accommodates continued growth by integrating the Riverside County General Plan with transportation and environmental issues. The three parts of the RCIP are the Riverside County General Plan (adopted 2003), the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) (adopted 2003), and the Community and Environmental Transportation Acceptability Process (CETAP). The transportation component of the RCIP broadly examines opportunities on how the existing and future transportation system can contribute to and alleviate expected pressures from forecasted traffic volumes on the network. Benefits from alternative modes of Transportation are identified and include transit improvements that can generate opportunities for economic development in established urban centers by attracting compatible land use activities. Rail transit is envisioned as a travel option that can contribute to higher quality living environments by reducing auto dependency, concentrating compatible land uses, and relieving pressure to develop open space. Long-term plans call for an extension of the Riverside Transit Corridor along the San Jacinto branch line to the City of Hemet.

- City of Riverside General Plan 2025 - City of Riverside (2007)

The major principles underlying this General Plan are focusing future development near existing transportation corridors ensuring land uses are supported by an efficient local roadway network; embracing innovative solutions to congestion on freeways and regional arterials; supporting alternative modes of transportation such as walking, biking and transit; and ensuring that transportation options are maximized for all community members as necessary components of an effective and safe circulation system for Riverside. Circulation and mobility strategies must be comprehensive to overcome the City's long-term transportation challenges. This General Plan— and its two keystone elements, Land Use and Urban Design and Circulation and Community Mobility — provide such comprehensive strategies. The Land Use and Urban Design Element of the General Plan focuses on incorporating “smart growth” principle into planning and development decisions, and focusing development in already urbanized areas of the City rather than spreading growth to the urban fringes. The Circulation and Community Mobility Element of the General Plan acknowledges the need for alternative modes of transportation, and emphasizes the City’s support for the extension of SCRRA/Metrolink 91 to create the PVL.

- City of Perris General Plan 2030 - City of Perris (2005)

This General Plan is a 30-year guide for local government decision on growth, capital investment, and physical development in the City of Perris. Due to the interrelationship of urban and rural activities (employment, housing and services), and the low average density of existing land uses, the private automobile is the dominant mode of travel within the City of Perris. As the population grows, city roads will become increasingly congested. As a result, it is important to encourage increased ridership on public transit systems and increased use of alternative modes of transportation. The public transit system alternatives for City of Perris include: fixed route public transit systems, common bus carriers, and other local agency transit and paratransit services.

The Land Use Plan broadly describes the types of land uses and intensity of physical development that will be accommodated in the City of Perris through the year 2030. The Downtown Specific Plan discusses the future development of a commuter rail station planned for the old Perris Depot area, providing a new spur to Riverside, Los Angeles and Orange Counties, and expanding commuting options for residents of Perris. Implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan including related infrastructure improvements is anticipated to improve the appearance of Downtown. The purpose of the Circulation Element of the General Plan is to provide for a safe, convenient and efficient transportation system for the city. In order to meet this objective, the Circulation Element has been designed to accommodate the anticipated transportation needs based on the estimated intensities of various land uses within the region. The rail system plan would extend service between the Cities of Riverside and Perris along the San Jacinto Branch Line to the City of Hemet. The City of Perris rail line would continue to be used for freight activity along the BNSF and would share the line with future Metrolink service.

- Perris Commuter Rail Extension Patronage Estimate (2000)

This study estimated the potential for long distance commuter rail ridership from the southwestern area of Riverside County to Downtown Riverside via the Riverside Metrolink Station and then beyond to Los Angeles by way of existing Metrolink ROW and track. The study did not examine shorter trips between communities in southwestern Riverside County. The study concluded that the proposed commuter rail service would grow to more than 3,800 daily weekday trips by 2020.

- Union Pacific Riverside Branchline Improvement Study, Boyle Engineering for Riverside County Transportation Commission (2000)

This study examined the viability of acquisition of the Union Pacific Riverside Industrial Lead (UP RIL) by RCTC to provide service into the Riverside Downtown Station from the SJBL. Several track improvements and new track connections were examined. Two new connecting tracks were proposed: one at the crossing of the UP RIL and SJBL near Rustin Avenue, and the other connecting the UP to the BNSF at the Riverside Downtown Station.

- San Jacinto Branchline Commuter Rail Study, Boyle Engineering and Barton-Aschman Associates, Inc. for Riverside County Transportation Commission (1995)

This study examined the viability of commuter rail service along the SJBL ROW for commuters in Riverside, Moreno Valley, Perris, Hemet and San Jacinto. The commuter rail implementation plan consisted of 38 miles of railroad ROW upgrades between Riverside and Hemet/San Jacinto on the SJBL.

- Development Plan and Negative Declaration for the construction of Phase I of the proposed Perris Multimodal Facility (2006)

The City of Perris prepared a CEQA document (2005) that analyzed the environmental impacts of the first phase of a proposed multimodal facility that will initially serve buses, and later, commuter rail service. A NEPA Categorical Exclusion was also prepared for FTA in 2006 because of federal grant funds to the Riverside Transit Agency (RTA) for the facility.

- Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS): I-215 Improvements, California Department of Transportation (2001)

This FEIS evaluated improvements on I-215 and short segments of SR-60 and SR-91 in the Cities of Riverside and Moreno Valley. The selected High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Alternative included one HOV lane in each direction between University Avenue on I-215 in Riverside and Day Street on SR-60 in Moreno Valley. This joint Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and RCTC study was undertaken to implement improvements on approximately six miles of I-215 and portions of SR-60 and SR-91. Improvements from this project extend from north of the Eucalyptus interchange to north of the Columbia Avenue interchange on I-215; south of the Mission Inn Avenue interchange to the West Junction of I-215/SR-60 with SR-91; Main Street in the City of Riverside to the East Junction of I-215/SR-60 and to Frederick Street in the City of Moreno Valley on SR-60. The HOV Alternative required acquisition of additional ROW. This alternative would establish HOV connectivity between the existing HOV roadway on I-215 from University Avenue to east of the East Junction on SR-60 in the City of Moreno Valley. The HOV alternative was adopted into the RTP and the RTIP. It should be noted that the I-215 Improvements project identified the highway improvements that would maximize throughput with the existing freeway corridor. Even with the proposed improvements, congestion would remain severe and would not meet the forecasted demand.